المجلس الاسلامي
Islamic Council

WELCOME SPEECH BY MR SALEM AZZAM,
SECRETARY GENERAL, ISLAMIC COUNCIL,
AT THE CEREMONY TO LAUNCH THE BOOK:
SHAHEED UL-ISLAM, MUHAMMAD ZIA-UL-HAQ
IN LAHORE ON 18 MARCH 1990.

16 Grosvenor Crescent London SW1 7EP Telephone 01-235 9832 Telex 894240 Islami G Cables ISLAMIAH

Honourable Brother Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Distinguished Guests,

Assalaam Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuhu.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the Zia-ul-Haq Foundation Overseas I extend to you all a very warm welcome to this ceremony to launch the book: Shaheed ul-Islam, Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq. This book has been produced by the Islamic Council as a humble tribute to the outstanding services of Shaheed Zia-ul-Haq to the cause of Islam.

The choice of Lahore as the venue for this ceremony is not accidental. We chose Lahore because this city enjoys a unique distinction. It was here in 1940 that the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent passed the historic Pakistan Resolution, aimed at establishing an independent Islamic state comprising the Muslim majority areas of India. United as one man under the inspiring leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Muslims achieved the seemingly impossible. Within a short span of only seven years they succeeded in creating an independent state in the name of Islam. It was a singular achievement because Pakistan was, and continues to be, the only state in contemporary history created on the ideology of Islam.

Unfortunately, the Quaid-e-Azam passed away soon after the creation of Pakistan and did not have the time to establish an Islamic order. Nor, for nearly three decades after his death, did any regime make a serious effort to do so. It was only President Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq who took it upon himself to give effect to the raison d'être of Pakistan and fulfil the cherished aspiration of its Muslim people to see their country turned into a truly Islamic state.

I had the honour of meeting with Shaheed Zia-ul-Haq on several occasions and of following closely his national and international policies and programmes. The one central fact involved was that all were formulated within the ambit of Islam. At home he was steadfastly committed to making Pakistan a truly Islamic state: a state wherein its overwhelming Muslim majority would be enabled to organise their individual and collective lives in accordance with the principles and teachings of Islam. I shall not go into the details of his efforts to Islamize Pakistan's legal,economic and social systems as an excellent account of those efforts and achievements is included as an article in the book which we have gathered here to launch. I hope and pray that the people and government of Pakistan will spare no effort to see to completion the Islamization process started by Shaheed Zia-ul-Haq. Here I wish to stress that Islam is firmly rooted in the Muslim conscience and no ruler or government can ever succeed in iradicating it. Therefore, any opposition to Muslim peoples' aspiration for the establishment of an Islamic order in their lands is bound to fail. The sooner the concerned authorities grasp this reality the better for everyone.

Shaheed Zia-ul-Haq's total commitment to Islam was beyond doubt. As I have mentioned in my foreword to the book, he was the only head of a Muslim state to sign the Universal Islamic Declaration to affirm his commitment to it. This Declaration was proclaimed by the Islamic Council at an international conference held in London in 1980. Again, he was the only head of a Muslim state to sign A Model of an Islamic Constitution

to show his support for it. The conference which announced this document was held in Islamabad in 1983 and was inaugurated by Zia himself.

Indeed, it was because of his impeccable Islamic credentials that the entire Muslim world chose him as its spokesman to address the thirty fifth session of the United Nations' General Assembly. His historic speech on that occasion is included in the book.

In the international field his greatest achievement, which Islamic history will record in golden letters, was his role in the Afghan Jihad. With a deep sense of history and strategic vision, and his constant commitment to Islam, Zia at once grasped the grave danger which the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan posed, not only to Pakistan but to the whole Islamic Gulf region. With little help or support from any other nation, and resisting intense Soviet pressure and threats, Zia showed rare courage and determination and gave total and unflinching support to the emerging Afghan resistance. As ex-President Carter's Natioanl Security Advisor, Brzezinsky, has pointed out in his article 'Zia was the architect of the Soviet Union's greatest political and military defeat.' It must not be forgotten that for the first two years Zia stood alone in his support to the Afghan Jihad.

The valiant Afghan Mujahideen inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Soviet superpower and forced it to withdraw its armed forces from Afghanistan. The Jihad continues, with the object of removing the

Soviet puppet regime in Kabul and establishing in its place an independent Islamic government in accordance with the wishes of an overwhelming majority of the Afghan people. May Allah grant that this goal is soon realised.

That Zia was a firm believer in Islamic brotherhood is borne out by the fact that he received three and a half million Afghan Mujahideen as welcome guests in Pakistan. He never considered them a burden on Pakistan's meagre resources, but thought it his Islamic duty to share these with the Afghan brothers who had been forced to leave their homes in Afghanistan.

It was not only the Afghan Jihad that Shaheed Zia-ul-Haq supported. Other examples of his Islamic duty were his support for the liberation struggles in Palestine, in Kashmir, in the Philippines and elsewhere.

Here I wish to salute the heroic liberation struggle of the Muslim people of the Indian-held state of Jammu and Kashmir. Since 1947 they have been facing the brutal repression of the occupying power with great courage and fortitude. The ever increasing repression has served only to strengthen their resolve and determination to free themselves from the yoke of Indian occupation. I take this opportunity to stress that it is the Islamic duty of all Muslim governments and peoples to genuinely support their Muslim brothers in Kashmir. Mere lip service will not do. What is needed is practical and concrete help. I hope that such help will be forthcoming and the Kashmiri people will, Insha'Allah, emerge victorious in the jihad against the Indian occupation.

Distinguished Guests,

The board of inquiry into the aircrash which killed President Zia-ul-Haq and a substantial part of Pakistan's military elite established beyond doubt that it was the result of sabotage. But so far the perpetrators of this ghastly crime remain unidentified. The authorities in Pakistan owe it to the Muslim Ummah, and in particular to the people of Pakistan, to spare no effort to uncover the conspiracy and the people involved in it.

Distinguished Guests,

Before concluding, I wish to thank the Zia-ul-Haq Foundation Overseas for organising this ceremony. I thank also all the contributors to the book. My grateful thanks also to our honourable brother Muhammad Nawaz Sharif for accepting to be our chief guest here today and for gracing the occasion with his presence, and to all the distinguished audience. Finally, may I thank my colleagues in the Islamic Council and Indus-Thames Publishers for their part in the production of this book.

Assalaam Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuhu.